

ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

Monthly Report -- London Bureau

FROM:

Chief, Operations Group

EXTENSION

NO.

DATE

October 1987

25X1

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

OFFICER'S INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

1.

C/MOD

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C/ESG

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C/VAX-Commo Section

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Return to C/MOD

FORM
1-79

610

USE PREVIOUS
EDITIONS

GPO : 1983 O - 411-632

3 November 1987
MLD-7038

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service

FROM : Chief, FBIS London Bureau

THROUGH : Chief, Operations Group

SUBJECT : Monthly Report -- London Bureau -- October 1987

I. GENERAL

1. BBC announced during the month that it will not be taking delivery of the Honeywell automated system until June 1988, with staff training beginning in the autumn of that year and full operational capability not expected until April 1989. These delays in the automated system will have repercussions on renovation planning and the timing of moves to the new building. One idea under consideration by the BBC is to begin the roof renovation, requiring the FBIS engineers and chief editor to move into quarters vacated by the BBC Administrative Staff, in the winter of 1988 instead of in the final phases of the renovation.
2. In another modernization setback, the BBC has been experiencing serious difficulties with the Scientific Atlanta computer-driven control system which would allow full use of the two 11-meter dishes at Crowsley Park. BBC has now stopped making predictions on when it will take operational control of the dishes or the system.
3. The fiscal year got off to an inauspicious start with the dollar reaching a 5-year low against the pound late in the month. Gloomier forecasters are predicting that the dollar will drop to \$1.80 to the pound by the end of the calendar year.

II. OPERATIONS

A. Editorial/Monitorial

1. Bureau operations were disrupted the night of 15/16 October when hurricane-force winds caused power outages at Caversham and Crowsley Park. Back-up generator systems at both sites failed, causing some lost coverage on the midnight shift. BBC management has tasked its engineers with adopting procedures to prevent a repetition of such generator failures.
2. Bureau editors had a busy month with Gorbachev's active reappearance following his long absence, a 3-day Afghan party congress producing a 2 1/2-hour Najibullah speech plus speeches by five lesser officials, and open-speaker watches on Tehran Domestic Service in response to the

escalating situation in the Gulf. Coverage of the Gulf situation was somewhat hampered from the 11th to the 19th when line faults disrupted the main Tehran IRNA service and the bureau had to rely on the slower IRNA HF service.

3. PMU also rose to the occasion with extended work hours to cover urgent Pressfax material including reportage on Gorbachev's active schedule, the CEMA and Supreme Soviet sessions and Secretary of State Shultz's Moscow visit. The unit had a scoop on the 22d when it picked up -- in the 23 October KRASNAYA ZVEZDA -- the first report on the deaths of five Soviet generals in a 19 October helicopter crash. An editorial shift log was instituted in PMU in mid-month for distribution each morning to bureau management to keep all more fully informed of significant PMU developments.
4. PMU assumed coverage of the Moscow APN Military Bulletin at AG request and on 1 November will take over coverage of the OMAN DAILY OBSERVER and 'UMAN, which are no longer available in Amman.
5. Cologne Unit: The unit received congratulations from Chief, Operations Group for its handling of the 15 October Bundestag speeches by FRG Chancellor Kohl and Foreign Minister Genscher.

B. Communications

1. Internet: The system was down from 11 to 21 October because of a fault on the BMAC encoder. The fledgling Nicosia Tehran tape program had to be diverted to Washington, while London simply ceased sending for the duration of the downtime.
2. The bureau communications center once again proved its backstop capability when it protected all Austrian Bureau originated traffic (some 1,600 messages) from 29 September through 16 October while Austria resolved a garbling problem on its primary circuit. Then on 29 October, London handled all urgent material for Headquarters via the dedicated circuit when the Reston CPU failed for 3 hours.
3. The semi-annual traffic report, which fell due the week of 18-24 October, carried a record high daily average wordage of 115,771.

C. Lateral Services

1. PMU filed a PRAVDA article on "Video: Present and Future" to the American Embassy in Moscow at the request of the embassy's press section.
2. Hong Kong Bureau conveyed to London the USIS representative's appreciation for PMU's translation of a 26 August IZVESTIYA article on U.S. arms to Taiwan.

Did we
get?

3. An urgent request from Ambassador Price's staff for an interview with former NATO Commander Rogers in the Turkish paper HURRIYET was passed to Nicosia Bureau, which was able to meet a very short deadline and process the pertinent part of the interview for the ambassador before he departed post on TDY.

III. ADMINISTRATION

Personnel

1. Senior editor [] departed for Headquarters PCS on 9 October. STAT
2. New part-time administrative assistant/courier [] entered on duty 26 October, a welcome development which will speed up delivery of classified material between the bureau and the Embassy -- IF she can arrange a flexible sitter service for her toddler son. STAT
3. Bureau associate editors []
Tabulator Chief [] were presented Special Achievement Awards with cash emolument for outstanding performances in their respective fields. STAT
STAT
4. Bureau drivers [] received Safe Driving Awards for their superior performances on the road over the past year. STAT
5. Teletype operator [] was presented with a 20-year service pin. Ten-year pins were passed to teletype shift supervisor [] operators []
[] associate editor [] and PMU media analyst [] STAT
STAT
STAT
.....
6. Bureau technician [] was married on 3 October. STAT
7. Teletype shift supervisor [] was declared fit for duty on the 12th following a long recuperation from heart surgery in mid-July. STAT
8. Teletypist [] submitted her resignation effective 7 November to accompany her husband on a transfer out of the area. A replacement has been placed in processing. STAT
9. Islamabad: Local FSN employee [] died on 3 October following a short illness. STAT

IV. VISITS

To the bureau: [] editor en route to Tel Aviv PCS, and [] Headquarters Soviet analyst, on the 13th for bureau tours and briefings; ICCS Chief [] and Comsat project officers [] on the 27th for Internet discussions. STAT
STAT
STAT
STAT

From the bureau: Engineer [] and Communications Deputy []
[] to Landsec House in London and Madley for talks with BTI
and Comsat visitors.

STAT
STAT



STAT

Attachments

cc: Chief, Austria Bureau
Chief, Cologne Unit
Chief, Islamabad Unit
Chief, Okinawa Bureau